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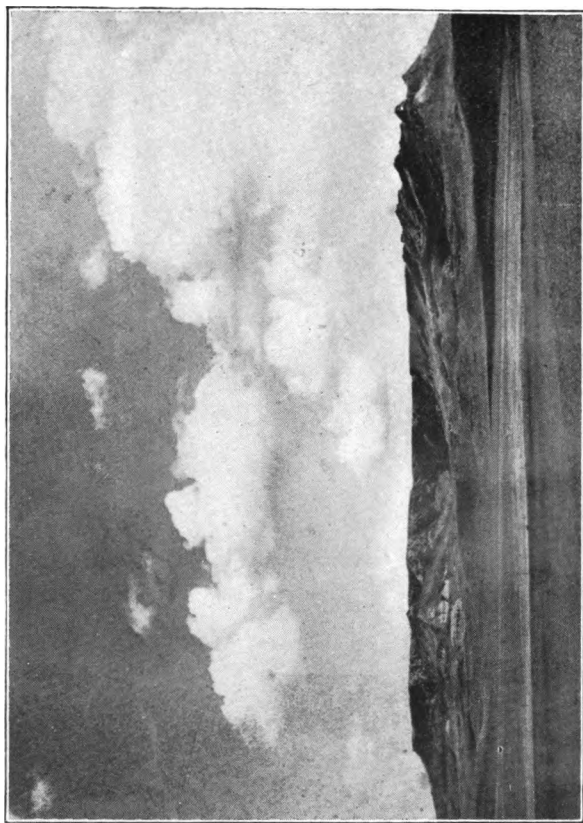






ENROLLMENT  
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**"SENTINEL BUTTE"—3430 ft. elevation; western edge of the Badlands.**

LC

# BADLANDS AND BRONCHO TRAILS

BY

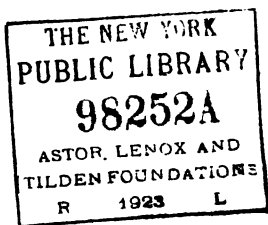
LEWIS F. CRAWFORD

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Hand. 23 Je 1723



## PREFACE

These sketches are not intended to make up a history of the badlands, nor a story of the occupations of the people who make a living therein. They are merely relief points in the monotony of every-day events and it is hoped they will stir in the reader's vein the pulse of interest in the Badlands and in the human side of the rancher's life. It is a commonplace to say that fact is stronger than fiction, truth more romantic than romance. The life scenes in the Badlands are really pictures in action—sometimes pathetic but always virile and stirring. Almost all of the frontier life and frontier types have passed, and will never be seen again in their picturesque setting. The stories of our Homeric age are worth recording, and I deem no apology is necessary if I venture to add a few pictures, however crude, to the romantic gallery of North Dakota's permanent frontier.

Lewis F. Crawford,  
Formerly of Sentinel Butte,  
Now of Bismarck, N. D.

Nov. 15, 1922.



## SENTINEL BUTTE



SENTINEL BUTTE is situated just outside of the western edge of the badlands on the main line of the Northern Pacific at an elevation of 3430 feet. It overlooks the ground fought over by General Alfred Sully and the Sioux on August 8, 1864. Twelve years later General Geo. A. Custer passed the base of the Butte on his way to his final resting place on the Little Big Horn. The Northern Pacific reached this point in its construction in 1880, where work ceased for the winter.

Until recently Sentinel Butte was considered the highest point in the State but Black Butte, about forty miles to the southeast is found to be of somewhat greater elevation. The cut shows the view from the north side about a mile and a half distant.

The summit of Sentinel Butte is 650 feet above the village of the same name which nestles in a valley about two and a half miles to the north. The butte is three miles long from east to west and about a



half mile wide on the average and flat on top. To the westward the land is level or gently rolling.

The oligocene geologic period has a small outcropping on the west end of the Butte—revealing fossil fish; and a twenty-seven foot vein of lignite runs underneath the whole Butte, although much of the coal in near-by land is burned out.

The east end of the Butte is a fine point from which to view the badlands. From there one sees the riot of clay and tousled scoria representing all the pigments of bellicose passion. The opulent glare of the foreground fades imperceptibly into the gray incertitude and shadowy dimness of the distance. The best time to view the badlands is in the soft hours of late afternoon in June or July when they surrender all the wealth and wonder of their beauty—sometimes sweetly frightful, sometimes terrible, sometimes pathetic—always irresistible. Involuntarily one uncovers before this unscarred sanctuary, this soul-accreting solitude—the BADLANDS, the static achievement of the Infinite.

## IDYL TO SENTINEL BUTTE



HAT A bewitching charm there is about Sentinel Butte—her solemnity, her grandeur, her majesty, and her agricultural inutility! What a history the geologist reads from the delicate tracery of her fossil fish, the prodigal veins of her lignite, the scarred escarpments of her declivities, and the rocky battlements of her towering summit!

In unremembered aeons of the past slimy saurians dragged their cumbrous lengths over her surface and fishes gambolled in the salty deep which covered her, and have left only fossil remains to tell their reluctant story. In the next day of geologic time the sea was swept away and in its wake grew up dense forests, and mastodontic mammals to feed on their succulent herbage, and in quick succession the alchemist

in Nature's laboratory added the massive beds of lignite as a continuing chapter in her wondrous past. Majestic and reverent is the mind and speechless the tongue when contemplating the dynamic changes, the upheaval, the subsidence, the deposit, the erosion—yet there she stands, true to her name—a sentinel, a guide, an inspiration.

How many times have her protecting gorges given security to the buffalo, the deer, and the antelope! How many times without human audience, have her solitudes resounded to the wolf's lonesome ululations or the piercing sovereignty of the eagle's cry! How many times has she served as chart and compass to Indian hunter, half-breed trapper, or Jesuit priest! What dauntless courage did she give to Sully, when her more than "forty centuries" looked down upon the Battle of the Badlands. What sublime faith or unavailing hope did she bestow upon Custer and his handful of brave men as they bade a last adieu to her retreating form from the Yellowstone divide.

If her lips could speak of the past, what chaos, what loneliness, what struggle and solace, what achievement and defeat, what glory and what gloom! If to her were the gift of prophecy, what peace and plenty, what serenity and contentment, what nobility and grandeur, what inspiration and hope, what faith and what holiness could not her unsealed lips foretell?

She has hitherto stood the most conspicuous tenant in a solitude of vacancy superlative, though now within daily vision of five thousand prosperous people in the far-sung Golden Valley, who raise their hopeful matins and thankful vespers to her benignant and towering form out of whose womb issues fruitfulness surpassing the wont of Nature. Though now surrounded by thrift and activity, may she herself ever stand unprofaned by the hand of commerce—the veritable “Great Stone Face” to these who look upon her confidently expecting and patiently awaiting the fulfillment of prophecy.

## A RANGE TRAGEDY



he wide open range plays no favorites. Here the law of the survival of the fittest finds unpitying expression. Here the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong. The claw, the horn, the hoof, the fang are ever ready to act on the aggressive or the defensive as occasion demands. In the ceaseless struggle for existence the unfit must give way or become fit. Only thus is Nature's balance maintained. Even domestic animals develop "rustling" qualities when left in large measure to shift for themselves in the wide, unfenced, semi-arid ranges. Nature is quick to take advantage and improve upon not only the physical form of animals but on their instinct and intelligence as well, in order to prepare each the better to meet the demands of its environments.

Under the constant need of self-protection range horses and cattle, even as wild animals, are alert in scenting danger and resourceful in meeting it. Thus reared they develop a hardihood unknown to their own kith and kin brought up on farms where their every whim is gratified by the husbandman and where there are no predatory animals to wage unrelenting warfare against them. \* \* \* \* \*

The heart-wearying snow blanket that had covered the ground for many lingering months had disappeared. Even the spring squalls that occasionally swept over the plains in blinding fury had reached their seasonal limitations, and the air was becoming warm and balmy. The buds of the stunted sage were bursting; the pasque flower had come and gone, primroses dotted the gumbo spots with charming beauty, the lilting lark bunting was sending forth his liquid notes from winged flights, and the shining new

coats of the cattle gave a holiday appearance to their plumping bodies.

The fear of storms being over the cattle had begun to range farther and farther back from the rough breaks and water holes onto the fresh luscious grass of the open plains, broken only occasionally by a brush-fringed draw or coulee.

Cattle are gregarious, yet a cow, seven or eight years old, went apart from the range herd of white faces which was slowly grazing along the banks of the Prairie Dog—a dry run in summer but now containing a running tricklet of water and at intervals a considerable pool. Approaching maternity sent this cow to seek sanctuary in solitude. She wished to avoid the eyes of the merely curious in the herd she had left, now some distance away, and secreting herself in a clump of plum and chokecherry bushes she awaited her months of expectancy to culminate in a little wobbly baby as dear to her as life itself.

In time her welcomed agony was rewarded. She licked her helpless, pinknosed, floundering, white-headed baby into shape. With much encouraging and almost inaudible crooning on her part, and after many ineffectual efforts on his part, he arose on unsteady legs for a few moments—instinctively nosing the while his full dinner pail. Many times he collapsed only to struggle to his feet stronger, and each time he arose stood for a longer period as his augmenting strength enabled him to do. He was hungry and his every thought was the life-giving milk, which instinct taught him was provided somewhere within reach. After getting his first breakfast he lay down in full content to rest after his rewarded exertions.

This poor mother, like others of her kind, was the product of instinct and experience, both of which taught her that death lurked among the foothills and the gulches more frequently than upon the open plains, where an enemy might less readily approach



unobserved. In every flit of a bird, the hum of an insect or the rustle of the wind, her terror paid the price of her tenderness. But her own bodily wants soon became insistent. She had a feverish thirst. She had been in this secluded draw a whole day and night without drink and the nearest water was two miles away. As the day wore on her fever and thirst increased—water she must have.

After repeated cautions to her baby to lie still and make no noise while she was gone, she cropped a few mouthfuls of grass edging away leisurely the while towards the nearest water hole. After every few steps she looked around with dilated eyes suffused in a crowning mother's love upon the object of her devotion as he lay obediently flat upon the ground and repeatedly crooned, as she edged away, a low good-bye and many heartening reassurances that she would not be gone long. He lay there sweetly in his infantile ignorance and in the blessed calm of

inexperience, his thick velvety coat shining in the warm sun and his eyes beaming with contentment, his weakness and innocence adding their twin appeal to the instinctive mother love for protection.

Only the pangs of thirst could drive this mother from her offspring. She admonished him by look and word and gesture to lie still and make no noise while she was gone and she knew he would instinctively obey. After she had gone leisurely, and apparently unpremeditatedly, a hundred yards from the side of her baby, she took a last affectionate look to the rear before heading with rapid gait straight for water. She lost no time, drank until her thirst was quenched, when with quickened pace she retraced her steps.

In her absence the despoilers set the seal of disaster upon her hopes. A pack of lurking coyotes, unknown to her, was impatiently awaiting her expected trip to the water hole, and in her absence had fallen upon

her bossy with sharp fangs and ravenous appetites and not only torn him limb from limb but had devoured his last quivering shred. The stricken mother, dazed in agonized grief, sniffed the bloodstained grass and knew that he had been killed and devoured, yet with that mother's love that knows no bounds she returned time and time again to the sacred spot, where the agony of her travail was so soon forgotten in the brief transport of her maternity—and poured out her heart in lonely lamentations.

It may be that the philosopher is right when he gives to humanity a soul and to the "lower" animals only an instinct. It may be that the barrier between the powers of expression in man and thoughts that are imprisoned and dumb in the lower animals places the former in a higher category; but to us common folks, the mother-love is always the same wherever found.

For possibly thirty-six hours the disconsolate mother mourned and would not

depart the grief-hallowed shrine. At times it seemed as if she were harassed by an upbraiding conscience reproving her for leaving her offspring until he were strong enough to accompany her to water. She seemed to think that in some way, somehow she might have been spared this sacrifice. But no matter, she did not eat, she did not go for water—all she wanted was a chance to lavish her abounding mother-love upon her promising son who had been so suddenly and so shockingly torn from her.

At first she walked around with head erect and ears alert to catch a sound that might bring relief to her burdened heart. Again she would sniff the grass or bawl in pleading tones, then listen for a response which never came. As time wore on she stopped walking and at infrequent intervals sent forth a prolonged succession of bawls, hoarsely strident, ending in a low moan, as she stood a defeated and agonized object of pathos.

But mothers must be brave and not give way to grief. She had just met one of life's big, bitter tragedies and with back bowed, hair standing on end, unkempt, with eyes sunken and body gaunt, she gradually drifted with feverish and bursting udders to the herd, which she entered unobserved, bearing her burden of sorrow alone, buoyed, as I think, by the sweet memory of the loved and lost.

The coyotes again pour forth their bitter hunger-howls; and her kind, as before, depart the herd in solitude to find their young.

## THE OLD REGULAR



he great West is a monument to the services and achievements of the Old Regular. He was homeless, yet everywhere at home. Unlike the volunteer, he was not a citizen of the state, but a citizen of the Republic. Usually under political disfavor, and, for the most part held by the public just short of contempt, yet he did his work with no approving voice to cheer him on, with no Red Cross nurse to alleviate suffering and ease the pangs of death.

The Regular traversed wind-swept plains, alkali deserts, snowcapped mountains, treacherous rivers; surveyed unknown wilds; built army posts; escorted gold-seeking caravans; executed punitive expeditions against crafty savages, and in all, as a matter of course, faced death gloriously for the honor of his flag.

He laid out and protected the numerous overland trails that penetrated the West. What entrancing story is woven into the Santa Fe, the Salt Lake, the Bozeman, the Oregon, the Fort Keogh trails! What gripping tragedy was enacted on the banks of the Washita, the Republican, the Powder, the Big Horn, the Yellowstone What superb Indian fighters—Canby, Crook, Custer, Fetterman, Lawton, Miles, Forsyth, Howard, Pershing What resourceful adversaries—Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, Roman Nose, Black Kettle, Gall, Dull Knife, Chief Joseph, Geronimo!

In the stormy scenes of a tumultuous life he displayed matchless fortitude. He was the incarnation of law and order, duty and service; his was to obey, not to argue. No swashbuckler, no chronicler of his own deeds, no vain-glorious braggart, he. His great victories have been almost unnoticed and practically unrewarded. No herald or press agent embellished the story of his trag-

ic fate. His life was ruled by iron requirements and unfalteringly he paid the penalties. His prowess has been all too seldom storied on wood and canvas, in bronze and marble. No marvelous pile even elusively suggests his virtues, yet each Regular, as a part of the old army, in perfect self-effacement gave his best—all he had to give. The spirit of the gift proves his kinship with the Divine. He is the outstanding figure in a tale of thrilling interest, the brilliant chapter of a history too little known, the embodiment of the toil and moil of frontier life, the settler's advance guard—the harbinger of civilization. Undisturbed by wavering unsureness or spectral haunting fear, the Old Regular stands in unflawed strength, steadfast in unshaken hope and errorless purpose. Though in his zenith in the heroic age of the West, he is the unlaurelled hero, unwritten and unsung—a vicarious sacrifice on the altar of civilization.

The Regular “rests where he wearied and lies where he fell”. At the old Fort



Keogh Crossing on the Little Missouri lies one of the Old Regulars—buried in 1877. Beneath the silken whispers of the pine, overlooking the tortuous windings of the Little Missouri,

“Slumbers a whirlwind of the heart’s emotions,  
Love, hatred, pride, hope, sorrow—all save fear”.

What more fitting sepulcher! Here in the wildness and seclusion of the badlands, where conical buttes, heaven yearning, stand like sentinels at the outpost of death—far removed from the tolling bell, the gilded casket, the rich trappings, the funeral wreath—it is fitting he should sleep in the land his valor won. This lonely mound, garlanded only by the wind-sown herbage of God will be a shrine of devotion for peoples yet to be. The narrow house containing these unconscious shreds of human clay, is but one of multiplied thousands, similarly occupied, that singly or in pathetic clusters dot the great West. Their lives were spent away

from the respectable lust, the feverish unrest, the voluptuous splendors of civilization, and it is fitting that the scenes of their triumphs be their palaces of peace. Theirs the daring, ours the dowry; theirs the privation, ours the plenty; theirs the victory, ours the veneration.

The conquest of the West will be a worthy theme for the artist and poet as long as the heart has reverence and heroism its votaries. Those old days are gone, together with the harming hazards they begot; but every community in the West is enveloped in the sacred memories of the Old Regulars, and their deeds are enshrined in the hearts of a grateful citizenry.

Today we gather lush harvests above their undreaming dust—which we fain would moisten with an indebted tear. Time may dim but it will never efface the memories born of their heroism. Peace to their ashes!

## VESUVIUS



he Circle N Outfit was astir making ready for the arrival of an expected guest from Boston—by name B. Buttlerford Frothingham. The information had leaked out that B. Buttlerford had never been out West, that he had recently been graduated from Harvard, and that he might make the ranch his home for some years, and that his antecedents were people of financial distinction and lived in the aristocratic Back Bay district of that famous old town. Guests the Circle N Outfit nearly always had, and they came and went without making so much as a ripple on the variegated routine of ranch life—but never before had they entertained one from classic Boston. The men, all westerners, felt ill at ease for fear they could not make feel at home one who had spent all

his days within the shadows of colleges, art museums and libraries. They speculated in their own minds as to whether he were large or small, morose or pleasant, irritable or tranquil and whether he would fit into ranch life or be forever in the way. They had found by experience that the more schooling some received the less able they were to accommodate themselves to their surroundings. Would he be a man and try to learn to do a man's part or would he want to remain a guest and be waited on just because he was a nephew of the Boss? Time alone would answer these questions.

In order that the reader may the better understand what follows a brief picture of the ranch personnel and surroundings is necessary. The ranch owner, or Boss, as the boys always affectionately called him when speaking in the third person, was by name Sid Monroe, and was moreover an uncle to the expected guest from Boston. Monroe, too, like B. Buttleford Frothingham was

born in Boston, had finished college and had come to the badlands country of Dakota along the Little Missouri when a mere youth over a quarter of a century earlier. He was intimate with Theodore Roosevelt when the latter occupied the Chimney Butte Ranch for a brief spell but a few miles farther up the Little Missouri.

Then there was Tex Miller—a long lanky, thorough-going cowman from the Pan-handle who acted as foreman, but more often known as the straw boss. He spoke slowly and with a southern drawl. He came to the Northwest years ago with a trail herd for the XIT and after staying a few months liked the country and decided to remain permanently.

The other ranch hands were Shorty Reeves, Si Sailor, Handsome Hughes, and Jo-Jo the cook.

Only during the summer months was there a woman on the ranch—and she the wife of Sid Monroe the ranch owner. The dining room and kitchen of the ranch house

were in use all the time, but other rooms were closed except when Mrs. Monroe spent her time there.

The men stayed in the bunkhouse and so far as the reader is concerned at this time, the bunkhouse is the most important part of the ranch. The ranch house and bunkhouse were on a tract of high level ground overlooking the root cellar dug into the bank, the calf weaningsheds, the saddle horse corral, the blacksmith shop, the cattle sheds, the hay corral and the round cutting and roping corrals, with branding chutes, which were on a low level flat.

The bunkhouse sat back from the ranch house and between it and the lower ground occupied by the sheds and corrals before mentioned, and was a sort of a rendezvous at all times for the men when not occupied at their ranch work. This building was a one story affair constructed of red cedar logs set in the ground stockade fashion. Its one outside door was in the center of the long

dimension facing east. The roof supports were cedar poles with a cedar log over a foot in diameter serving as a ridge pole, and others almost as large parallel to and half way between the ridge pole and the eaves. The roof itself, nearly flat, consisted of dirt almost a foot thick and surfaced with finely broken red scoria from a near-by butte. There was no ceiling overhead and the roof supports were exposed to view in all their massive strength.

The bunkhouse was fifty-two feet long by twenty-four feet in width with two bedrooms on either end entered from the main sitting room which occupied the center. This sitting room was furnished with an eight-foot reading and writing table, a round-burner Rochester lamp, a number of easy chairs of rustic patterns, a couch that could be opened up for a bed when needed to accommodate "reps" in the round-up season, as beds at such times were always in demand, a round-oak lignite heater used in winter

and left standing over the summer, and an Edison phonograph and a case of records on top of which lay a somewhat battered-up accordion.

The fir floor was bare except for half a dozen navajo rugs of warm attractive red and gray designs, and a pail half full of ashes which served as a spittoon and a receptacle for cigarette stubs and smokers' ashes.

On the wall to the right of the entering door was a gun rack—an arsenal with almost every sort of fire arm from a Buffalo Spencer to an Automatic Colt's. Some of them had done market shooting when the Northern Pacific was building and two—badly rusted—had been picked up where Gen. Alfred Sully fought the Sioux in the Battle of the Badlands August 8, 1864.

Opposite the door on the west wall was an eight day Thomas clock encircled by a large pair of elkhorns. Almost all of the remaining wall space was taken by the mounted heads of elk, black and white tail deer, antelope, mountain sheep, and a single



buffalo bull head—brought from the Grand River in 1885—one of the last of the wild northern buffalo herd. A further wall adornment consisted of two tapestries—skins mounted with full heads—one a silver tip bear and the other a mountain lion.

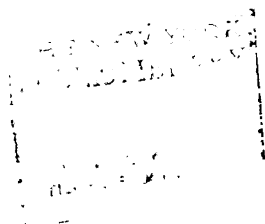
On the left of the door stood a book case with shelves filled in the main with tales of exploration and wild life.

On the reading table were copies of the Breeder's Gazette, a few rather ancient daily papers—as the mails came usually about once in two weeks, and a large stack of Heart in Hands—running back for several years—in whose columns brunettes and blondes—by their own admission beautiful and highly accomplished—were just spoiling to enter into connubial bliss.

While awaiting supper the men, who had come in from their various duties, were pitching a game of horseshoes in front of the bunkhouse. Monroe had gone to the Railway Station to meet the train and bring out his nephew, but was expected back by



**"FIELD GLASS ROCK"**  
**A clay pedestal surmounted by sandstone.**  
(Photo by Collis)



supper time. They did not have long to wait.

"They's comin'", said Tex, whereupon the boys stopped their game of horseshoes and looked toward the east where they could see emerging from Coyote Pass the buckboard drawn by Jackknife and Gunpowder coming in a trot. When the buckboard came to a stop in the yard and its occupants alighted the boys were there sizing up the new arrival. After formal introductions Shorty and Si took out the team, unharnessed and turned them into the saddle horse pasture, while Tex and Handsome unstrapped the trunk from the buckboard and carried it and the traveling bag into a spare room in the bunkhouse.

Everything was new to B. Buttleford Frothingham. His quick eye and trained mind took in the surroundings—but as he was ignorant of western life he remained discreetly silent except when asked a direct question. The boys had observed that B.

Buttleford was rather undersized; that he had a pale, closely-housed complexion; that his eyes were blue and penetrating; and that his bearing showed gentility and breeding and that he put "r" on idea and where that letter was needed omitted it entirely. On the whole these first impressions were not unfavorable.

Supper being over the men, as was their custom, gathered in the bunkhouse where associations were always democratic and free of restraint. By mutual consent Monroe was expected to do most of the talking on their first evening. B. Buttleford was wholly credulous and was prepared to hear unusual and strange things. On this score the westerners always measure up to their opportunities. The subject of conversation was not prearranged, yet the boys were sure Monroe would sustain a reputation he had been years in acquiring.

When cigarettes were rolled and pipes filled Tex opened up—"We'll all have to go

to Medory on the 15th to help 'em ride the outlaws," and then turning his head toward Frothingham, "Did you ever see 'em ride an outlaw?"

"No," said the latter. "I have read Emerson Hough's Story of the Outlaw, but I didn't know they rode them I thought they hung them."

If this had not been said with such a beaming innocence all would have violated their sense of good breeding by laughing outright, but as it was no one even smiled. Monroe, to save his nephew from embarrassment began:

"The outlaw we mean is different. You are a tenderfoot, or as we call them here, a juniper. Shorty, open the windows so the lamp will not heat up the room, I'll explain to the kid what an outlaw horse is."

B. Butterford felt that he had blundered but he did not know how or where. He welcomed this opportunity of getting the information he needed and at a time and

place where he might ask even foolish questions without any fear of embarrassment. He was all ears and nodded for Monroe to continue.

“Life with you in Boston consists of a permutation of baked beans, codfish balls and first editions; while with us accomplishment is measured in terms of excellence in riding, roping and handling the gun.

To begin with, unconquerable vice in horses is found at infrequent intervals and is less often than supposed due to cruelty and misunderstandings. Originally the horse was a wild animal as vicious and untamed as the giraffe, the zebra, or the Bengal tiger. When Cortez invaded Mexico in 1513 he brought horses with him, the first ever seen on the American continent. Some of these horses escaped and reverted to the feral state, from which they sprang. Mustang, cayuse, Indian pony, bronco, are terms applied rather loosely to the small horses of the plains. A bronco is really a green un-

broken horse. An outlaw is never a green horse but is one that all efforts to subdue have failed. He makes a reputation for deviltry and labors to sustain it, under any and all circumstances. Sometimes in breaking a horse the "buster" will inoculate meanness into him, which turns him against man, but as a general thing, outlawry is due to wildness combined with a diabolical nature. A green horse usually pitches but he is not schooled in the art and any ordinary rider, as we use the term rider in the west, can ride him straight. But let a bronc with a satanic disposition throw his rider several times and he may become a demon. He feels the vertigo of power. It grows on him and embellishes him. He accepts the homage of his kind. Such homage I verily believe feeds his vanity and enthrones passions and insures the growth and triumph of orneriness. A horse that breaks in two every time one gets on him and wipes up the scenery until the rider, with undignified reluc-



tance, severs personal relations with him, is called an outlaw. Every outlaw dispenser of agony has his own peculiar method of administering the traumatic shock. You have certainly heard of some of these old twisters that have written their hic jacets in the boot-hill burying ground of the Northwest. A few of the candidates for the equestrian hall of infamy I might name at random, are Steamboat, The Powder River Spinner, Midnight, Tango, Wild Cat, Dynamite, Spokane Keystone and Vesuvius. While each has his peculiar claims to remembrance, Vesuvius was, in some respects, the most noted and right here and now is a good time for me to give you a brief and colorless account of his outlawry.

“Vesuvius was born in the badlands on the winding little Missouri River and spent his life among the steep clay buttes and deep gorges adjacent. As a colt Vesuvius scaled unfooted crags capped by friable scoria and swept by unarrested winds. When

older he gathered his nourishment from the dry grass and the stunted sage which grow in these wild regions. His drink was usually tinctured and often strongly impregnated with alkali. He was battered by blizzards in winter and maniacal winds in summer. Whether these things had a bearing on the development of his temper and disposition I can not say. I am merely stating facts and will leave you free to draw what seems to you the most obvious conclusions.

"I have had a nodding acquaintance with Vesuvius for a number of years. I have seen him at his best and at his worst, and in every mood between. In person, Vesuvius got more than a passing notice from any horseman that looked upon him. This attention came, as I see it, not from his beauty or loveliness of form or evenness of temper, but rather from the spell he seemed to cast over one. You have heard of a bird's being charmed by a rattle snake. There you have it. In color Vesuvius was a dun with a dark

stripe down his back. He was slender in body with slightly arching ridge pole and a cut up flank, which betokened speed. His leg bones were small and flat and the muscles attached to them well rounded, hard and elastic. His chest was wide and ribs well sprung, giving assurance of activity even without a forced draft. His feet were flinty and round and in the most trying embarrassment he always lighted right side up. His neck was long and slender and he habitually held his head low, indicating a certain cautious modesty, and in this case, a malignant self-reliance born of undefeat. His nostrils were large, his eyes small and sinister, showing a preponderance of white, and his ears pointed and alert and on the lookout for danger.

"But I know you are little concerned with the outward form of Vesuvius. He is known best by what he has done. A marvel of equine vitality was his. No one who has ever seen him in action can forget his dilating nostrils, his ear-piercing screams, his

foam-flecked mouth, his heaving bellows, his savage breathing. His frenzy in action was enough to chill the incentive of any buckaroo. The character of Vesuvius defies the static limitations of language. In disposition he was a cross between a Bengal tiger and a hyena—a compound of Apache cunning, an alkali dust storm in Death's Valley and a Mexican revolution. Even at that his conscience never heckled him. He was so cautious that he could walk in fresh snow without leaving tracks and his caution took second place to his suspicion. It seemed as if fortune had exhausted its resentment against him and he in turn passed it on in full measure heaped up and pressed together. The very thought of riding Vesuvius was accompanied with meditation and prayer. Every advantage that could be accorded a rider was given. He was allowed to hobble his stirrups, dampen his chaps, pull leather. All range rules were suspended by common consent and no one was expected to ride him

straight, much less quirt him on the shoulder or rake him down the hip. No one willingly volunteered to mount Vesuvius unless he were a member of a suicide club, or else were jibed or dragooned into doing so by the heckling of the bystanders. When volunteers were called for, every buckaroo wished he were a matron of a foundling asylum instead of a rider with a reputation he felt like living up to. In some ways Vesuvius was an anomaly. Contrary to what you might expect he stood fairly still to be saddled. All that was necessary was to get a Tom Horn on his front feet. One never had to throw and hog tie him, put a blind fold on, twist his nose or bite an ear. Really I think his good conduct while being saddled is due to his consciousness of power. Bucking with him is no pastime, it is a profession. No one ever long stood the fury of his hurricane deck, the serpentine coruscations, the sunfishing gyrations of this veritable vertigo of terror. At the first jump he usually

drove the rider's head through the crown of his Stetson; at the second the riders' cervical vertebrae periscoped his cranium unless it were case hardened, and what happened at the third jump is a mystery we are just now trying to clear up. Preliminary to the riding, hackamores were put on the tender-feet like you, who happened by chance to be among the onlookers, so as to prevent their getting frightened away into the badlands and lost.

"Well do I remember that 20th day of July, 1915, when the last attempt was made to ride Vesuvius. It was a superb day, clear and calm. Fully five hundred people had gathered to witness what was hoped would prove a solution to a mystery that had for years confounded all scientific speculation. Really, preparation was made not so much to ride Vesuvius, as not one of us believed this could be done, but rather to solve the mystery of what became of his riders as not one had ever been heard of since making the at-

tempt. To this end a full laboratory of supplies was provided, including moving picture machines, cameras, microscopes, telescopes, microtomes, slides, and retorts. Observation stations were erected here and there in advantageous places and when all was in readiness, Brazos Bob came out all booted, spurred and chapped, as a willing clinic in the interest of scientific research. He was known as a fearless rider and for years he had never pulled leather. It was customary when bad horses were to be ridden on Round-up days to bring out a first aid pack and a stretcher, an improvised ambulance department was held in readiness, and a searching party was organized to bunch the remains. Not so when Vesuvius was up. Past experience had taught us that with him it was Hunnish completeness—"Spurlos Versenkt". As I said, Brazos Bob was to be the rider. Before presenting himself he disposed of his personal trinkets to those bound to him by the ties of affection,

preparatory to his certain translation. In truth, Brazos told me before hand that he did not expect a different result than had befallen the four buckaroos who had previously tried to ride Vesuvius. He was not afraid, but felt elated that opportunity offered him such a signal service in the interest of science. There was a lack of the usual badinage indulged in on such occasions. The crowd was funereal in its behavior. When Brazos mounted, Vesuvius started spinning on a space not larger than a silver dollar and so fast that the camera left only a misty blur. Suddenly he unlimbered, or more properly began to unwind, and fly off in tangents, all the while belching forth hot blasts from his crematory. The earth shook as if a battery of 75's were firing at will. These movements were only preliminary to the final hemorrhage, when with a detonation as if a charge of TNT had been released inside him, he simply suspended the laws of gravity, quit the earth and I think tried to paw



the white out of the moon. As before, Vesuvius' efforts were mad, overpowering, triumphant. So far as my memory goes, not even a trace of the rider or his paraphernalia has ever been found that would smear a slide or stain a retort. All that Vesuvius left as evidence of his struggle was a mirage of dust, a heated ground, a few wefts of grass and mishappen foot-prints, petrified in the sun-baked sod.

"I can not overstate the horrors of the scene. Almost without exception the on-lookers were left suffering with cases of paralysis agitans, which continued for some days and subsided with little or no treatment. This matter, I understand, has been laid before the American Medical Association and a full report is expected at its next meeting.

"The facts stated above are given by the bacteriologist and metalurgist specialists, substantially as I have narrated them and will be found printed in Vol. 369 of the

Smithsonian Institute Reports, if you care to read them.

“We are still trying to find the missing riders. Some think they were thrown beyond the earth’s atmosphere and freed from the air’s resistance, may have dropped far off, like the long range shells upon Paris. Personally, I do not think it well to speculate, since we have Wm. J. Burns and Sherlock Holmes working on the matter, and while they admit the case baffling in the extreme, yet their pride will not let their efforts relax and they hope to have some tangible theory to present before long. Until some decision is reached, let us hold our verdict as little can be gained by discussing this unusual mystery. To withhold judgment at this time is further commended in that it shows a spirit of fairness and will not interfere with the investigations or prejudge the subsequent findings of the detectives. Being from Boston you have no doubt read James’ ‘The Will to Believe’ ”.

During the course of the narrative the ranch boys supported Monroe with absorbing faces and frequent nods of approval Frothingham looked puzzled at two or three statements in the narrative and had to strain to comprehend what was meant, but never a trace of doubt crossed his countenance.

As a final confirmation Monroe added: "If the kid here", referring to Frothingham, "has the least doubt of the truth of what I have said he is at liberty to ask any one who was present at the Roundup for a corroboration".

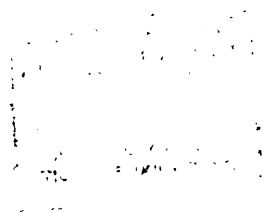
"I was there" drawled Tex, "You shore told the truth".

It was almost ten and a hard day's ride up the Big Dry and Skull Creek on the morrow.

Lights went out; the stars shone brightly through the undraped windows. Everything was still, but for the querulous ye'ping of a few distant coyotes. Yank, for



**"FLYING DEVIL"—Sunfshing. Lee Caldwell, rider.**  
(Photo-Marcel)



such was our Boston friend named by Si, looked blanched and nervous on retiring and slept fitfully during the night—probably due to the loss of baked beans and codfish balls from his menu.

## NUGGET



**N**UGGET Is no more. Though he had lived his allotted time his departure bears the aspect of a calamity—for he was my friend. He has left a place in my affection that equine flesh can not fill. If you have ever owned, and used and loved a good horse no apology need be made for sharing in my grief.

Nugget was only a cow horse, and to say that he was a good one is to give the highest praise—as no other avenue of usefulness is so demanding in strength and intelligence. His sire—Redbox—was a thoroughbred used in the range breeding herd on a badlands ranch in western North Dakota. On his sire's side his ancestors fought with William of Normandy; careered in gilded pageantry on the "Field of the Cloth

of Gold"; lent distinction and knightly prowess to the jousts at Windsor; consorted with kings at their coronation; and contested for speed honors in New Market Heath, the Derby, and later, in blue grass company, at Lexington.

On his dam's side his ancestors adorned the Remuda of a Mexican Vaquero and probably as Indian Cayuse was a part of the travois cavalcade of Geronimo, Roman Nose and Red Cloud, and no doubt his ancestors' bones, rasped by coyotes and bleached in the sun, are now strewn in nameless obscure corners of the western range country.

In arching neck, breadth of forehead, lambent eyes, silken main and tail, round barrel, elastic step and poetry of action Nugget left little to be desired. He had the intelligence, resolution, speed and endurance of the thoroughbred without his excitability. In limb he was lithe and sinewy; in pastern strong and springy; while in general build he was inclined to the low-down stock-



iness of the cow-horse rather than to the legginess of the thoroughbred. In fact he was a cow-horse—and his quality was attested by every muscle and vein which stood out in becoming relief through his short silken hair—black as a raven's wing.

Nugget reveled in the wild free life of the big untamed prairies. He went straight-forward—never see-sawing, looking for a path or road. He did his work with little coaxing and no abuse. Such a horse usually develops blemishes and early decrepitude; not so with Nugget. While he was a free goer, yet he conserved his strength and seemed always to have a battery of latent energy for use in emergency. Not occasionally, but often he surprised his rider by accomplishing a feat the rider thought impossible. There are many horses that can carry a rider over a long straight-away journey. But the test of skill comes in surmounting difficulties—cutting out a rebellious steer on slippery sod, heading bunch-quitters out

of almost inaccessible breaks; with precarious footing dragging a bog-victim to safety; holding his feet on icy paths overhanging palpitating chasms; keeping right side up when running at break-neck speed over rough ground and rolling boulders; or when far from the ranch and help, to hold a "boned" steer, wild by nature and enraged by suffering, until the rider could dislodge the obstruction. These are some of the tests that every cowhorse has to meet and unless he meets them safely and unflinchingly he can lay no claims to being a cowhorse.

A saddle horse is an equal, a companion, and friend; a work horse is a servant, a slave. We esteem the former for his personal human traits; and the latter for the work he gets done. When I say this I do not mean that the work horse is a mere machine. He is more than a machine, yet his value is measured primarily in foot pounds; while the saddle horse is primarily a co-operating partner whose value is too intimate and per-

sonal to be stated in terms of money. I say this without any depreciation of the noble, patient, plodding, faithful work horse; for I yield to none in my estimation of his worth.

There were no metes and bounds to Nugget's endurance. He could go to the end of the road, turn around and come back again, and there was never a time when you had the feeling that he would not accomplish all you wanted him to do. Some horses are easy under the saddle; others are rough, especially one that has been stiffened by work or is untrained. Nugget was not rough in any gait, yet he especially excelled in a graceful, voluptuous, swinging lope that was exhilarating rather than tiresome. He was never trained on the track yet he and three half brothers came out second in a relay race at the North Dakota State Fair at Fargo.

In roping I have never seen his equal. When the rope tightened on the ensnared animal he was always in position to resist

the shock and no amount of kicking and bellowing effort on its part was of avail. He knew when to give, when to set his brakes, when to go into reverse, and he always avoided "entangling alliances". His head was working all the time; he knew what he could do and no urging was necessary to make him do it. His quiet composure always got him out of "mix-ups" whether on the rope, in snow-drifts, quick sand, or swirling water.

With his matchless endurance he combined a ready willingness. A touch of the rein to his neck would lead him to clear a gulch or nose into an arctic gale of stinging snow that only the sheep of the crag might face and live. The rider always felt that Nugget was "adequate"—and confident that he would come through—which he never failed to do, so far as it was equinely possible.

Nugget had no faults urgent for correction. When tightening the cinch he would

sometimes lay back his ears and bite playfully but never in anger. He would rogueishly do the same thing when you gave him one apple core and he thought you ought to have another about you. These only served to prove his humanity.

No man who loves a good horse can be wholly bad. The contact with domestic animals teaches loyalty, mercy, justice and kindness—traits that this work-a-day world needs above all else. A ride on Nugget after a hard day's work in doors was to clasp hands of reconciliation across the chasm; to drown troubles in the waters of Lethe; to turn back the hands on the dial of Chronos; to drink of the waters of youth. Almost any horse will give pleasure, but Nugget had a rare quality which added a finality to satisfaction. To characterize him is to deal in superlatives. "The gift of speech alone, makes masters".

Nugget was so gentle that woman or child was safe in his keeping and he was

beloved by all. No one can acquire lovable attributes by associating with a four, or six, or even an eight cylinder machine. The normal human being wants flesh and blood on which to develop and lavish affection. Some of the sweetest recollections of youth are connected with a saddle pony. Machines and flats are robbing the boys and girls of their birthright. The gymnasium and the golf ground may furnish competitive exercise for the gregarious and the glib but they lack the reciprocal elements so prominent in horse-back riding—that of cooperation. But I babble.

One of the rarest and most valued traits of Nugget's character was the inherent kindness ingrained in his very nature that in times of severest strain he did not lose. No sacrifice was too great and no road too long for him to take for his friend. His disposition in youth was sweet and winning; and since it was never calloused by injustice, it remained so to the end.

Every cowman who reads this little tribute is bristling up ready to contest Nugget's right to so high a place in my affections. "Shake, old boy. You're one of the princes' of earth. You're no cowman unless you can erase the name Nugget and substitute that of your own favorite."

In short, human affection Nugget had, such as is possible to those that serve under the saddle, never to those that slave in the harness; endurance tested in a hundred memorable rides; surefootedness, tried in a thousand embarrassments; and what are more important a cheerful obedience and a willingness to attempt the impossible.

Nugget, inalienable tenant of my heart, farewell!

"I shall not look upon his like again."

## HORSE THIEF SPRINGS



**W**HILE Working with one of the W Bar wagons we camped one night at Horse Thief Springs. No evidences of former habitation remained except an old shack dug into the bank.

All had just lighted their pipes and were sitting around the camp stove in the bed tent. There was some curiosity expressed as to how the springs got their name. "You know, don't you, Bill?" asked one of the young riders.

This question was directed to one Bill Evans.

"Yes, I ought to know all about it," stated he succinctly.

Now Evans was a man of fine principles and a terror to outlaws, a man six feet in height, spare built but muscular. He had



been Sheriff of old Billings County when it included an area as large as some of the Eastern States. All knew from experience that it was useless to try to cajole, bluff or buy him. He came over the trail from Texas and had worked for the old Three Sevens a number of years.

All was silent and he continued:

“When I was first elected Sheriff there had been complaint about losing horses by ranchers living up and down the Little Missouri. No one seemed to know what become of the horses and no one even suspicioned who was getting away with them. I knowed that some one must be taking them acrost the line into Montana—because the horses would’ve been heard of if they’d gone in any other direction. This is a big county to ride over and I just naturally give myself no rest—until I could find who the horse thieves were. Some of you may remember that a stock protective association was organized to break up this gang of rustlers and every-

body was on the watchout for them, and we calculated to make them stretch hemp, if we found them. But horses kept coming up missing. Finally I makes up my mind that this here shack was housing the thieves. I lay close down on the hill over there a mile north and watched with my field glasses for several days. One reason I thought they were a doing the work was because they had little else to do. They pretended to be wolfing, and I never heard of them getting but a few and their hides were tacked up on the front of the shack to make as much show as possible. I was by there observing several different times and I allus noticed that the same hides were there.

“But, as I was a going to say early one morning when I was watching from the top of the hill I saw two men a coming from the Southwest just below Five Points. I laid close and just waited. In less than an hour they comes riding up to the shack, gets off and unsaddles and begins to get breakfast.

When the smoke was coming out a plenty I crawls down the off side of the butte, where they couldn't see me, and crep' down to my horse, which I had picketed in the clump of trees in that big gulch over there, where he woud be out of sight. As Chaney and Carter come up, for these were the names of the thieves, I noticed that their horses were a moving powerful slow. They looked all petered out and carried their heads low. I made up my mind then that they had come a long distance—at least a full night's ride from some place where they had some pals. From the direction they come and the distance they could make in a night's ride—by riding hard, I calculated that they must 'uv come from over on Cabin Creek Montana.

“So I got on my horse and rode to Sentinel Butte—the telegraph station, as fast as I could go, and notified the sheriffs of Dawson and Custer Counties over in Montana and also Pussyfoot Cameron, the live stock inspector of Miles City, to meet me at

Glendive the following night, as I had game to windward. Now they hain't been no better men than these three. We met as arranged and decided just what we'd do. Above all we wanted to get the thieves and break up the gang. The four of us agreed to work in from different directions toward Cabin Creek where I made up my mind we'd find them.

"I knowed Chaney and Carter would be idle for at least four or five days for their horses to rest before they'd size up another bunch of horses for their next trip to Cabin Creek. We rather suspected that the stolen horses were being taken by a line of relays clear up into Canada—and this afterwards proved to be the case.

"Inside of three days riding we located a shack in a rough gulch on the head of Cabin Creek—that had a lookout butte near it, and was a fit place for range deviltry. Two men and a woman, reported to be the wife of one of the men, lived there. We had a

couple of pack horses with us with a little grub—and couple of bed rolls, as ranchers were far apart. After locating the shack we didn't dare get far away because we expected Chaney and Carter to be coming along in a few days with another band of stolen horses, which would be passed along to the next station, as we believed by the two we had located. So we just laid low and kep' our eyes open.

“We didn't have to wait long, however. On the second night about four o'clock Pussy-foot and me were awakened by the sound of horses' hoofs. We were stationed near a trail that led to the Cabin Creek shack. We crawled out, as we had our clothes on, and buckled on our pistols and with guns in hand, crep' up close to the road and by laying down could skylight the whole outfit and not be seen either.

“There they were, two men on horse-back driving a small band of about thirty horses. They seemed to be minding their own business, so we let them go right on.



(Photo by Collis)

The "CACHE".

2000

"In about twenty minutes we noticed a light in the house—which confirmed our suspicions. Carter and Chaney had undoubtedly gone in to get breakfast and would probably sleep during the day, or at least, that is the way we doped it out. So while Pussy-foot just watched I sneaks around about a half a mile to the west to see that our partners—the two sheriffs, were hipped to what was going on. They were already wise to what was doing, had rolled their bed and were waiting for word from us. We agreed to close in to within one hundred fifty yards of the house before it got light and lay low until daylight. We left our horses back where we had kep' them over night—as we knowed they'd be sure to nicker if we brung them up in sight of the loose horses and the jig would be up.

"So we just tramped around, enough to keep from getting too stiff, as it was purty chilly at that time a morning, and waited for daylight. As soon as it got light enough for



a white handkerchief in the hands of Pussy to be seen from the opposite hill where the two sheriffs crouched—he give a signal and we walked up slow-like to within seventy-five yards of the house. There was no light showing in the shack except on the side where Pussy and me stood. The bed rooms was on the opposite side and our two pals could see nothing. Pussy and me could make out the indistinct forms of two men through the window—in the dim light of the small kerosene lamp. We raised our guns and fired. Just at that instant two men ran out of the door at a two-forty gait for the barn, which was a little log and sod affair at the bottom of the gulch. We let a few shots loose in their direction to keep them moving swiftly and I'll be blamed if we didn't make a plumb miss, as it was still too dark to see our gun sights, and they got on their horses, took up a gulch and got clear away."

Here Evans stopped—shook the ashes from his pipe, picked up a sprig of buck

brush and began to clean his pipe stem.

But young Lowery one of the listeners, impatiently asked: "Didn't you hit either of them?"

"Well, continued Evans slowly "the woman was then making a great hullabaloo so we went to the house to see what the trouble was all about, and what do you think? There were two dead men on the floor both of them shot in a vital part of the body—one of them passed for the husband of the woman who was stirring up such a commotion. A smoking pot of coffee and a skillet of bacon were on the stove and we needed no invitation to fall to and help ourselves. We turned the two bodies over and see that nothing short of the judgment day would bring them to—so we drug them out into the bed room and spread a horse blanket over them. Being as they were already dead we couldn't be no more help to her. We brought up our saddle horses and give them a bite of hay. While they were eating we

just naturally explored around a little. We found a pole shed covered with old hay—built back into the bank. It was closed up and dark. We opened the door and there before our eyes were about thirty head of horses, all T's from the old Deep Creek ranch. Horses of the same brand are used to running together and drive in a band with little trouble—while horses picked here and there will not stay together and will wear saddle horses out to get them over the road. This is why they stole in straight brands.

“So we turned the horses out—to start them towards home. This was the morning of March 12th. The weather had been warm for the time of year for two weeks and there wasn't no snow on the ground. The snow was just a commencing—and we pulled out toward home mighty quick, to where we knowed of a ranch on Beaver Creek where we could get a flop if the blizzard come on as it 'peared to be doing. We reached the ranch by noon and stayed there

for four days—and such a turrible blizzard I never see before or since. The wind was so strong it would hold a rope straight out.”

“Didn’t you ever see the men who got away”, “Were they Carter and Chaney”? was asked.

“No, we didn’t see them any more. About the middle of April a sheepherder found the bodies of two men southwest of Sentinel Butte. They were just beginning to thaw out after the deep snow drift that covered them had melted. The bodies were Carter’s and Chaney’s. We come on the shack so unexpectedly on Cabin Creek—and in their haste to make their get away they didn’t get their overshoes or overcoats on. They undoubtedly started for home here, to this very shack, but the blizzard caused them to lose their way and both just naturally froze to death. One horse was found dead with the saddle on and the other saddle was found—but not the horse.

“This was the beginning of the break-up of the worst gang of horse rustlers I ever

knowed of, and since that time these springs have been called Horse Thief Springs.

“You can’t tell me anything about that blizzard” said Sid Monroe, the roundup foreman, “I was in it too.”

## THE BANKER'S PLOT



FTER Some urging all waited expectantly.

Whereupon Monroe straightened up from his reclining posture on his bed roll, draped one leg over the other, clasped his hands over his knee and began:

"I have lived in this man's country ever since 1902 and for fifteen years before, but I want to say in all that time I have not seen the equal of that March blizzard either in length of duration or intensity. Now don't get into your mind that this blizzard was a common snow storm. Not on your life. When I was a college student on the Atlantic seaboard I saw some heavy snow storms there, but to compare one of them to the blizzard of 1902 is to compare the Tower of Babel with the tin whistle on a toy locomotive.

"The winter of 1901-2 I spent on Third Creek, not a great way from the old Logging Camp. As some of you may recall, the Logging Camp was so named because this was the point that the railroad ties, hauled from the Cave Hills, were dumped into the Little Missouri and floated to Medora in 1881 when the Northern Pacific was building. I said, I spent the winter on Third Creek, but as a matter of fact only that part of it up to the tenth of March. The winter was considered easy, aside from this one blizzard, and where feed was plentiful cattle came through in splendid shape. The summer of 1901 was dry and grass was not so good as usual, and hay, except stacks carried over for several years, was scarce and of poor quality. My cattle had come through in fairly good condition but the grass was about all gone from the territory tributary to Third Creek. In fact the range close around the ranch was so bare that one could not have got enough grass on an acre with the use of a grubbing

hoe to make a bantam's nest. When our cattle were rounded up and a wagon load of necessary supplies was loaded we were ready to start. The summer camp was located some six miles north of Rainey Butte, on the left bank of the Cannon Ball. It is usually dangerous to move cattle out of the badlands into the open prairie so early in the season, as there is some risk from spring squalls until the middle of May. But my necessity was such that the cattle had to be moved to new feeding grounds, the danger, as I saw it then, being greater in the badlands from lack of feed than from lack of protection against an occasional snow storm on the high level lands. For some days before my departure with the herd the weather had been mild and every vestige of snow had disappeared, but in doing so it had filled every pool, pond and creek with water. For two successive nights even the water in small pools had not frozen, birds were twittering in the trees and every evidence, except the calendar, pointed to spring.



My wife and a son of twelve years set out with the wagon loaded with household supplies, and a small amount of wood, to take care of immediate necessities, until we could make another trip. Two men and myself followed with the cattle herd—about 1000 in number. This was all the cattle we had gathered except some fifty head that were under feed in the corrals, consisting of thin cows and a few young calves and non-descripts. On the evening of March 11th we dropped the cattle some five or six miles north of the Cannon Ball, where they had plenty of fine feed and could get water from pools everywhere. The sky was clear and we had neither apprehension nor premonition of evil. The wagon carrying my wife and son moved faster than the cattle and reached the summer camp several hours ahead of the herd contingent, which I accompanied. When we arrived it was late in the evening but we found that they had unloaded the bedding, and other plunder, and had

a good fire going and everything looking home-like. The summer camp had stoves of its own that were left there over the winter, and also some cupboards, wall furniture, and just enough chairs and bedsteads to leave the place picturesquely barren.

A little lignite had been left over in the coal house which had slacked to what seemed a shapeless mass of dust, but the wagon had brought in enough wood to last us for a week under expected conditions, so when we went to bed that night all were in the best of spirits. We were up before day light. The sky was overcast with rather ominous dark gray clouds and a gentle wind of some ten to fifteen miles an hour was blowing from the north by a little west. By the time it was broad day light the blizzard began with a gentle fall of icy pellets, which changed rapidly to microscopic snow siftings, increasing in intensity with the growing velocity of the wind. Soon the air was filled with horizontal veils of snow moving

in regular pulsebeats, and on the ground serpentine waves sped before the wind—crawling and sinister. As the storm progressed these surging gusts changed to a sustained tempest of arctic rigor filled with continuous blinding snow sheets.

“The cattle had not had time to get located on their new range and even under the best conditions would be somewhat unsettled. We had no sheds or wind breaks at the summer camp and in consequence were not prepared for severe weather. At this season of the year the cattle are always thin and they can not stand the grief they endure in the fall when they have more tallow on them. So leaving my wife and son at the camp, who I knew would make things as comfortable as possible, no easy task as the house was not built to withstand cold weather, my two men and I set out on horseback to ride on the cattle which we were sure would be ill at ease and possibly drifting before the storm at this very moment. No



rancher ever had more faithful men than the two who accompanied me. They were good riders, judicious, reliable, and thoroughly trained cowmen. I do believe that both of them would have remained with the cattle until they perished if I had given them the word to stay, or if there had been any chance of their saving the lives of the cattle by so doing. The three horses we rode had no superiors and in addition to innate good qualities they had been used as winter horses and had been oat feed and were equal to the most trying emergency.

“As was expected we found the cattle scattered over a territory several miles wide—all on the go and voicing an instinctive terror of the coming storm. Up to this time I had little foreboding, as so often we have snow flurries at this season that last only an hour or two, followed by balmy weather, but the cattle were so frenzied that I almost lost hope of trying to do anything with them. Animals have instincts that are surer guides

to their personal safety than all man's intelligence, and judging by their terror I expected the storm would be a record-breaker. The fear of monetary loss did not occur to me at the time, though the petty savings of years were bound up in this band of cattle, but uppermost in my mind was a feeling for their safety as their breeding and tending had given me a personal interest in their welfare.

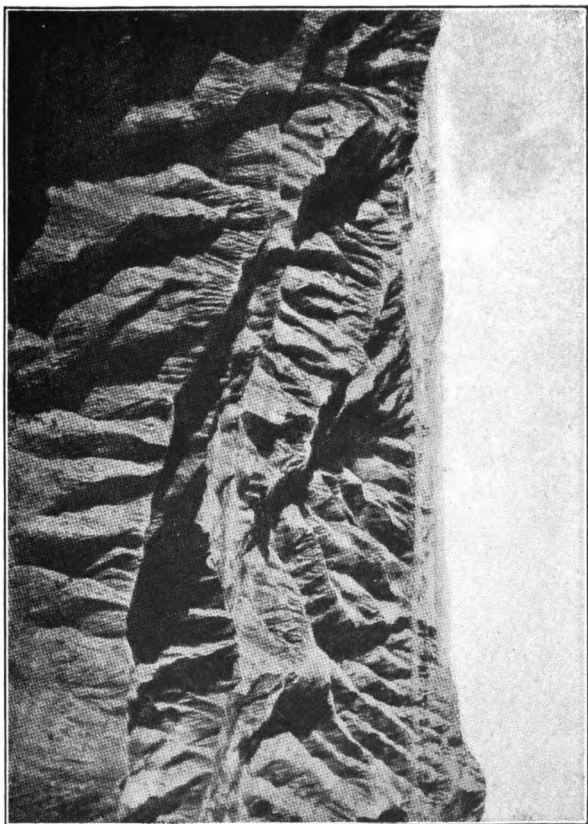
"The greatest danger from storms, I knew, came when the creeks were full of water, just as they were at this time. The wind was in the direction that would push the cattle directly into the tortuous windings of the Cannon Ball, in spite of all human efforts to prevent it. I reasoned that even if an animal got through the water the chilling blast after it climbed out would be too much for it to endure. I even went so far as to consider making an effort to take the herd back against the wind over our old trail into some sheltered gorges of the badlands. Such an effort, of course, was futile in the face of the

blizzard, now in progress, and besides it was too far to the badlands to offer any hope of our getting there.

“We rode to the southeast of the moving herd and made an effort to bunch them, thinking we might hold the leaders in check and possibly get them to milling, which together with the sense of security human companionship would give them, might stay their onward progress. We rode like Comanches, now here, now there, across a wide front to check the leaders and if possible hold a united front. The snow had blown into their hair until the cattle were almost white and the swirling spume often blinded us, making them invisible more than a rod or two away. The animals had turned tail to the wind, and in trying to stop them we were obliged to face the biting blast which brought water to our eyes, froze our lashes and the stinging snow particles gave a chilling numbness to our cheeks. The turning, and twisting on insecure footing, always at

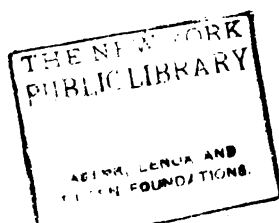
full speed, soon began to show upon our horses.

“Above the tumult of the storm we could hear the crunching of the cattle’s feet in the cold, dry, pulverized snow and a jingling of pendent ice wattles as the cattle shook their heads to free their lashes and eyes from the blinding siftings—but always onward. The temperature continued to fall rapidly and the velocity of the wind grew hourly in unbridled vehemence. With hissing quirt and much hallooing we would make a momentary check in one part of the herd only to find its irresistible flow had passed around on both sides of us to unite beyond in solid phalanx. Then we would fall back, get ahead of the herd to present a united front, and repeat, but on it came like an avalanche that simply overpowered us. It became clear that we were wearying our horses and the cattle to no purpose. The leaders in the march were the best and strongest cattle, followed by the drags more slowly but with an equally



**"BARREN BADLANDS"—Showing extreme effect of erosion.**  
(U. S. Geol. Surv. Bull No. 611)





dogged persistence. It was becoming so unbearably cold that the cattle could live only by keeping on the move, and as a last resort we tried manfully to turn the course by veering it so that it would miss the worst bends in the Cannon Ball. Here we met with no better success. Instead of saving the cattle it now became a question of saving ourselves. After a little hurried conference with my heroic, but now exhausted, helpers we did all that was left for us to do that offered any hope of success—and even that, as you will suspect, a forlorn hope, started to find the summer camp.

“In general we knew the direction of the camp, which was at least five miles away. To get there we had to three-quarter the wind. Our horses that had worked in heavy footing so willingly and freely for the past several hours had almost used up their vitality and found it difficult to take the punishment the breasting of the wind demanded. With bowed heads, so as to protect our

eyes and faces as much as possible, we gave free rein to our horses trusting in their instincts to carry us safely home. There was not another ranch for miles in any direction and if there had been we could have passed by and unless our horses stopped from instinct we would have passed unknowingly. We knew that neither horse nor man could stand many hours of such exertion in the face of this relentless blizzard. We had our misgivings. Our horses had stayed only one night at the summer camp and it was weary miles to the winter camp in the badlands. In fact the horses would go or try to go where they thought was home, but we were in doubt as to where they might think we wanted to go. Even horse sense can not always divine a man's mind. It was under such misgivings that we gave them the rein and underwent three hours of excruciating torture, now falling in ravines, now stumbling in buffalo wallows or over sage brush, now floundering through snow drifts, all with

fatiguing struggle. I'll tell you now that we were all dreaming, in a sort of semi-stupor, when our horses stopped short. The sudden stop roused us from our lethargy. We were within ten feet of the south side of the barn at the summer camp—but could get only momentary glimpses of it even at that distance through the swirling snow with our half shut eyes. Only by painful effort were we able to dismount and get our horses inside the barn. Our hands and feet were mere clubs, our cheeks were covered with a coat of ice and eyes almost closed. A tingling sensation at first gave evidence of returning circulation to hands and feet—followed by excruciating pain.

“It was nearly four o'clock when we hobbled our way to the house. My wife and son, blanched with fear for our safety, were overjoyed to welcome us. Thoughtful soul that she was, with the help of our son, she had brought in wood, a coal box full of lignite, in which were a few large pieces that had

been covered by the slack and escaped disintegration, much to my surprise, and plenty of water for household use. They had also filled the mangers with hay from an old butt of a stack, the last in the stack yards, and to cap it all had a steaming pot of coffee on the stove and a hot meal ready to put before us as soon as we were ready to eat.

“All three of us had our ears, nose, cheeks, feet and hands badly frosted and each of us lost at least a finger or a toe as a result of our experiences that day.

“Having nothing else to do we went to bed early to get a much needed rest after the arduous duties of the day. And I’m telling you that my sleep was burdened with the thoughts of the morrow. In all my waking moments there was the same monotonous creaking of doors and windows, the same straining of roof supports, the same flapping of loose boards and tar paper, and the same whistling and moaning of the wind through the gables.

"The next morning we were up early, but the prospects were harrowing in the extreme. I do not believe the U. S. Weather bureau has ever calendared a day that equals in blizzard severity that Saturday. It was only with great exertions that we were able to reach the barn and care for the simple wants of our horses. Sunday was almost if not quite as bad—although in the afternoon it seemed that the violence was somewhat abating—and here the wish may have been the father to the thought.

"The two days we were imprisoned by the blizzard we could do nothing but gaze spellbound on the storm's fury and grieve inwardly for the suffering of the unhoused animals and lament the financial losses that would come to the stockmen in all the territory covered by the storm. The snow crystals, ground to powder, blew like a cloud—which no eye could penetrate. The wind shrieked and moaned in a fury forbidding and cruel. It seemed that the whole world

was lost in a confused roar. Within doors watching its relentless, overpowering frenzy, we sat dazed in shuddering terror. All day Saturday and Sunday the thermometer was below zero and the wind maintained an unbelievable velocity of almost sixty miles an hour. Such malignant violence is without parallel. About ten o'clock on Sunday evening the first stars made their appearance through the thinning clouds and the wind gradually subsided to a stiff breeze. The blizzard was over.

“At daylight on Monday we were all astir. The sky was cloudless and the temperature stood 24 below zero. Never did slave work under the eye of a task master with more speed than we. With what few tools we had we cleared out the snow from the barn doors so we could get feed into the horses. Wherever there was a small crack the snow had found its way and formed huge mounds. In some places drifts were as high as the buildings, and hard from the impact

of the wind. We gave the horses time to eat while we cleared out around the buildings and then saddled and started eastward to strike the trail, now obliterated, of the herd, as it sped before the piercing blast.

“Our horses walked over the impacted snow, leaving only slight indentations. In some places the ground was brushed bare, especially where the grass was short. We did not ride far until my fears met their realization. Since we had left the herd on Friday noon it had drifted ceaselessly driven by the pitiless gale—and here and there leaving the dead hulks of the weaker to mark their sorrowful way. The force of the wind drove them blindly down the general course of the Cannon Ball. Being bank full and without ice made it a death trap for practically all that fell into its congealing waters. The cattle’s eyes were frozen shut with snow in many instances and they walked off the banks and were submerged in the water, swimming or wading through, clam-



bered out and as soon as the air struck them a coat of ice was frozen over their bodies. The stronger may have gone through two or three crossings, the weaker only through one, or at most two, before succumbing. Some drowned in the river, some stood ensnared in snow drifts, some fell in the open encased in icy coats of mail, while others with striving decency turned aside into eddying niches in the foot hills and there sought secrecy to face the last mortal agony.

“I had not gone far until I realized that I was no longer a cattle rancher. Of course there were many dead cattle that did not carry my brand. Some of them had come for miles farther to the northward. Occasionally we found a few of my original herd still alive, genuine relics clinging to the brink of immolation, their feet tender, their eyes red and swollen, pendant icicles still hanging all over them, and showing the general appearance of the severe hardships through which they had passed. As an after effect of the

blizzard, some of the surviving cattle lost their horns, others their tails, others their ears, and still others their hoofs, and some lost all these members. No more appalling sight has ever been seen on the western ranges."

Here Monroe paused as if his story were ended, when a voice piped up from a corner of the tent—

"How were you ever able to get cattle enough to run a wagon after your heavy loss?" Whereupon slowly Monroe continued:

"Well, for some time after the blizzard was over I continued to ride in the vain effort to find the remnants of my cattle—many of which I still hoped were alive, but my first fears were less stupefying than the facts. As the days wore on my old time optimism and good spirits departed leaving me depressed. I was painfully aware that the little property I had left would not take care of my mortgage indebtedness. My loss had been so unlooked for and so staggering, and

my resultant humiliation so complete that it seemed as if every spark of hope had been taken from me. Being naturally of an optimistic temperament, careful in my investments, and inexpensive in personal and household habits, caused the blow to strike me with redoubled force. I figured over my prospects, and painting them more roseate than the facts of the case would justify, I could see nothing but a loss for my one creditor and stark penury for myself and wife who, even under the dark outlook, remained cheerful and uncomplaining. Not once did she blame me for moving the cattle from the badlands earlier than had been my custom—as she knew as well as I did the necessity that prompted the removal, although as it turned out, if I had kept them in the badlands the loss would have been small.

“I had always prided myself on taking care of my obligations with promptness and hitherto I had never seen a time when I could not meet all reasonable financial de-

mands made upon me right on the dot. Now, however, I could not do so, try as I might. Brooding fear banished sheep from my eyes and tossed my frame in nervous agonized wakefulness. The old time buoyancy and decision vanished. My face took on a tired and hunted expression, the seamy corrugations in my weather-worn visage deepened, and my mind vacillated between unrealized hope and confronted ill-fortune. The fact that I would have to begin at the bottom gave me no qualms, but the knowledge that I could not pay what I owed lay heavily upon me.

“If I could get to a new place I felt that we could drown our misfortunes in hard work and abject but honorable poverty among strangers. I felt a desire to get away from it all, from my old friends and associates, and dreaded going to town for supplies which I would have to do before long. Formerly I went in with my head up, now I was dejected and downcast. My feelings may have been induced by a self-con-

sciousness born of a high degree of pride in my former standing in the community. I am trying to tell you just the way I felt, without in any way attempting to justify my acts and thoughts or the feelings that prompted them. I alternated in resolution whether to go to my banker in person and turn over everything, or whether I should write and tell him to come and take charge—and to leave between two suns. My feelings would be best spared by the latter method, but my mind was vacillating and even what at one time seemed a settled determination proved in the end fleeting, and every decision I made lacked anchorage.

“It was more than a month after the blizzard that I made my first trip to town to see my banker. It was probably the gentle encouragement of my wife that led me to make the trip—although I loathed to do it. On reaching the place I put my team in a livery barn but loitered, as if driven by a superior power than my own, until the

bank closed at four o'clock. Really I was gratified when I tried the door and found the bank closed for the day. I seemed to be driven by an indecision which I was powerless to overcome. During the tossings of the night I literally made up my mind and unmade it hundreds of times. My nerves were so frayed and irritated that I was unfitted to think calmly and logically on the one subject which harassed me, and the mental agony that tortured would not be put aside.

"Just how I reached the bank the next morning seems to me a perfect blank. My first remembrance came as I was leaning against one corner of the check desk awaiting my turn to the directors' room where the cashier was giving one by one the waiting line the third degree. There were at least a half dozen men ahead of me—each probably under a burden as great as my own but apparently carrying it more lightly. I had heard much of the heartless bankers

who gloat in an opportunity to strip those in their powers, but this was the first time in my life that the experience was to come to me first hand. While standing there waiting I had time to think of many things that I had heard of bankers—not one of which reflected much credit on them. Occasionally contentious rumblings would come from the cashier's room and I could catch a few strident and caustic words—just enough to fill me with the deepest forebodings. Although my banker and myself had always enjoyed each other's confidence and, I may say, even esteem, yet as I waited my doom my deep humility turned to loathing and hatred. I anticipated what I would get and steeled myself against him with a hatred which I can not even now fathom. I hated not only this cashier, but all the banks and bankers for loaning money and making possible the excruciating tortures which the sons of men like myself had to undergo. My agony of spirit was such that I could have

committed murder and gloried in it. As those in the head of the line were taken care of I found myself coming closer and closer to the door that entered into the director's room and in the presence of the cashier. All of a sudden I heard above the former more or less subdued conversation the voice of the Cashier: 'You misrepresented this to me, you'll pay every cent, and that before night, too', and judging by the tone, he meant it. The flushed face of the downcast customer as he emerged from the room showed he had undergone a cruel grilling. I had no time for further thoughts. At a signal from the assistant at the window, I entered. The Cashier looked up with a smile, much to my surprise and I may say almost my chagrin.

" 'Well, hello Sid, I'm glad to see you. I was just thinking of writing you. As a result of the blizzard losses many ranchers have cattle to sell at right prices. You have too much range for your reduced herd. Here's a check-book. Go out and buy up to

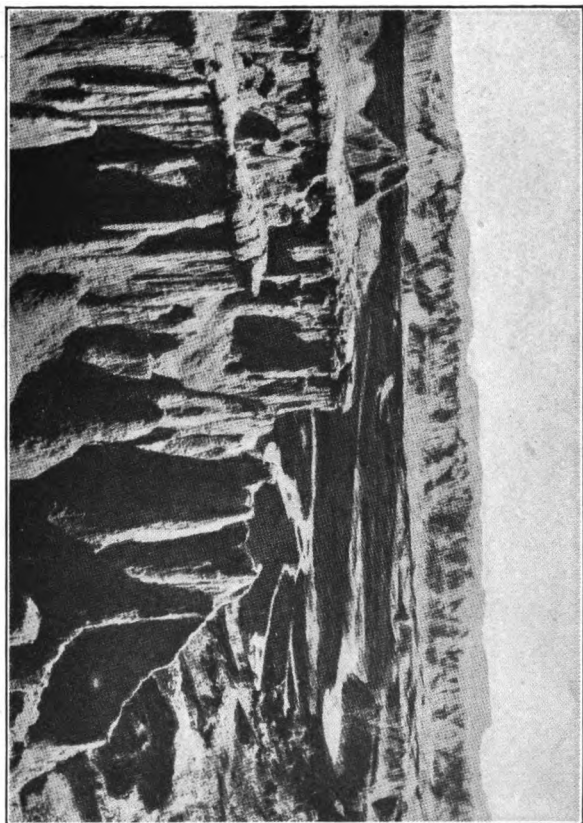


\$10,000 worth. When you're through come in and we'll make the papers out. I wish I could visit with you, but I am too busy just now. Good day.' "

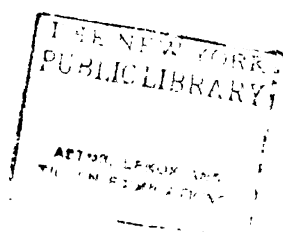
"I had my bristles up when I went in but the cashier did not give me time to say a word. I could not fathom how or why it had all happened.

"Being a good judge of stock I went out and bought from my unfortunate neighbors about 500 steers—all good ones, as the poor ones of the country were for the most part dead. During the next dozen years cattle appreciated in price and with free grazing and no taxes I soon recouped my losses and added to my herd, and this is how I got hold of enough cattle to run a wagon and to spare.

"It was some years after the blizzard before I learned that my wife, while I was dejected and almost deprived of ambition and selfrespect, had plotted with the banker without my knowledge, and the plot worked too."



**"BADLANDS"—Showing a section of the Little Missouri**



## BY-PRODUCTS OF THE DAY'S WORK



UR Work took the two of us on that delicious June day through a picturesque portion of the badlands. While we rode in the same general direction we were not together much of the time. As a rule we were in supporting distance, some times in sight of each other, some times lost to view behind some butte or hog-back or within the precipitous walls of a canyon.

The badlands were so named because of the difficulty of traveling through them—**Les Mauvaises Terres de traverser**. Beginning with the upper sources of the Little Missouri the badlands extend throughout its full course, growing more abrupt, higher in elevation and wider in extent the farther down the stream one goes. For a considerable stretch along the sinuous windings of

this stream the Badlands have a width of over 30 miles—the bed of the stream being 1000 feet below their outer margin.

Through the ages the Little Missouri and its numerous pitchy tributaries have been wearing their capricious channels deeper and deeper into the unarmored soil of this region. Clay is hard, when dry, but soaked by a drenching rain it melts before the torrents that force their turbid contents through narrow defiles into the parent stream. The waters of the Yellowstone and the big Missouri, glacier-born, are clear until defiled by the ochrous-throated gorges of the Badlands—and henceforth the Big Muddy runs true to name until its sordid waters mingle with the “all-embracing sea.”

The Badlands according to Nature's processes are young, yet to whose sombre antiquity the Pyramids of Cheops, Sodom and Gomorrah, Nineveh and Tyre are as yesterday. A like ever-changing, but variegated monotony; a like pristine barbarism

can hardly be found anywhere else in the world.

In 1912 a party of geographers and geologists from the Old World made a tour of the United States in the interest of scientific research. Among the places visited were the badlands near Medora. It was the unanimous opinion of those making up the party that the badlands offered more to bless the vision than any other place they had seen, and before coming to the United States they had covered nearly all the scenic wonders of Europe.

The Little Missouri river was at one time a sort of dividing line between the Sioux and the Crow Indians, each having theoretically a prescriptive right to its own territory unmolested. Even as we rode in imagination the eye saw the shadowy forms of the past. The mind reverted to the time when half clad humanity with unwritten history running back into the eternity of darkness dwelt here, and wondered how many

untabled thousands sleep within the rugged bosom of this provokingly wayward region. Less than half a century has elapsed since the twang of bow, and the death chant were heard here, but now all is still—the Redmen gone, except on scattered reservations—“None left them to inherit their name, their fame, their passions and their thrones”. They bore the sorrows and the burdens allotted to them and are at rest.

In the course of the day's ride we had to pass many places of historic interest, through Medora where the Marquis De Mores started the packing plant in the middle 80's, by the old beef-bottom corrals, the Maltese Cross Ranch location where Roosevelt one time lived for a brief period, by Custer's Wash and up Sully Creek, the scenes of Military Expeditions of days long ago, by the burning coal mine, the petrified forests and Cedar Canyon, and by the old gambler's shack. Since statehood it has been illegal to sell liquors in North Dakota,

but only when public opinion became insistent did the blind pigs move on, taking with them to new territory, or leaving behind as so much junk, their accessories and money extorting accompaniments. The doors of this shack were gone; empty bottles scattered here and there about the premises or piled in rounded heaps in the rear were mutely reminiscent of the days of glory. On the floor were the tattered remnants of a grizzly bear rug, mounted with full head; a rickety gambler's table with moth eaten green cover occupied the center of the room; a disabled slot machine that used to respond to contributions by giving forth strident music now stood voiceless and dust covered. A roulette table, the figures on whose dial were still decipherable reposed harmlessly in one corner of the room surrounded by scraps of abandoned clothing. The walls were adorned with the faded and tattered pictures of Lou Dillon, Dan Patch and several other kings and queens of the turf; some prize fighters



in menacing attitude cut from the pages of the Police Gazette, and not a few pink petal-ed daisies scantily attired portraying in color and daring suggestiveness the beauty of the stage.

The Badlands are still an almost unin-vaded sanctuary—scarcely defiled by the beautifying hand of man. To such a place one may turn from the hurry of life and find the lonesomeness agreeable. Here one still finds the cowboy, the sole remaining relic of the Old West, wearing a Carlsbad Stetson, Angora Chaps, the Justin boot, and silver inlaid spurs, and riding a horse caparisoned in the semi-barbaric but becoming splendor of a full stamped saddle, Navajo blankets, rawhide hackamore, hand-forged, silver in-laid bit and manila throwing rope. Here in daily use are the circular corrals, into which the saddle horses are driven when mounts are to be caught—where they turn and dodge in fuliginous confusion to escape the throw-er's rope. Here is the roundup with its hilar-

ious spurts of speed, range roping, herd cutting and where the herd patriarchs, solicitous for their harems, paw the ground and defiantly assert physical superiority in their narrowly limited vocal range.

There is probably no better year around grazing lands in the world and certainly not in the United States than the Badlands afford, when judged by three essential requisites; quantity of nutritious grasses, natural protection from the cold driving winds, and sufficiency of stock-water. The grazing wealth of the Badlands is in its short but nourishing buffalo grasses. Animals that feed upon them are fat, trim of girth and active. In order to get sufficient nutrition to sustain life an animal in the rainy regions must eat so much of the watery herbage that it becomes paunchy, logy and uncomely. Our horses always, and cattle and sheep for the most part, graze out all winter and it is a curious fact that they do better when on good grass than when kept in a corral and

fed hay. The hay, like the grass, is rich in protein but is deficient in carbonaceous or heat producing properties. The outside animal supplies its bodily heat by constant walking in search of food while the corral animal being confined, humps up and shivers and suffers from the cold. The western grass is nutritious in winter because it cures on the stem during the dry months of July and August, while in wet climates the frost kills the rank grass, sours its juices and leaves it woody and void of nutrition. The feeding tentacles of buffalo grass hold the clay soil in its place and prevent erosion from carrying the soluble and suspended particles into the wasting sea. Alternately seared by drought, frozen by the rigors of arctic winters, and grazed or trampled to hopeless barrenness, yet it creeps forth from its subterranean vitality on the first relaxation of its enemies. With all of its staying qualities it retires before the plow without a protest, and quietly bides its time. If a field be aban-

done it is over run by Russian thistles and other rank and reaching weeds, but within a few years, at most, the native grass quietly and unobtrusively reasserts its sovereignty.

With its creeping benedictions buffalo grass covers the scars of erosion with its velvety wealth, and only where a sunward declivity forbids the absorption of water is the surface left unclad. In our semi-arid regions it is the healing catholicon of nature—the antidote for barrenness; banish it and most of our western grazing lands would become as inhospitable as the Sahara.

Unseen the Badlands can not be imagined, but once seen can neither be described nor forgotten.

As one rides forward the view changes as a kaleidoscope—new colors, new shapes, new vistas that sometimes touch one feelingly and restfully or silence one by their allurements. There is entrancing charm in a region where nature is at her worst—where

gullies are washed by the merciless surge of time, where buttes with sides covered by infinite corrugations are scattered in promiscuous disarrangement.

The buttes when not wholly naked, are covered on their north sides at least with grass and, sometimes, trees—and are less steep—while the sunward-turned slopes are more precipitous and often aggressively sterile.

When not capped with stone, buttes are often conical or pyramidal, erode rapidly, and are as barren and look not unlike huge stalagmites.

Petrifactions, or more properly silicifications, are by no means rare, yet are less frequently found than either sandstone or scoria. Many of the buttes consist of pure clay without stones of any kind and where the lignite is not burned out there will, of course, be an absence of scoria, as the scoria is produced by the burning lignite beds. Half way up the side of a butte is sometimes

found the white petrified trunks of trees in splintered decay or gnarled stumps, which have resisted the action of the weather. A butte may be capped with scoria, conglomerated clinkers, or sandstone, while at its base unlovely masses of all these mingle in happy-go-lucky decadence.

Size is only one of the elements of grandeur. Beauty is usually made up of fine lines and rich colorings, and depends largely upon its transitoriness. It defies the camera. Beauty, whether in woman or nature, is never static. The camera always is. Mountains are too vast to get a close up view and too far away to give distinctness; they are grand, sublime, majestic, but are static lifeless pictures, unchanging through the ages from everlasting to everlasting. The Badlands are wilfully coquettish. Mountains are the cold marble statues with unspeaking lips and unseeing eyes; the Badlands are the living actors with flushed faces, beaming countenances and pulsing blood. The sublimity

of the mountains is awe inspiring and reduces the beholder to nothingness, while that of the Badlands is palpitating, alluring, ecstatic; the one soul subduing, the other soul accruing.

It is worth while to climb a high butte in the midst of the Badlands and alone gaze unmolested on the surrounding weird desolation and entrancing beauty.

On this particular day I wound my way to the top of Medicine Pole Hill. On reaching the summit the sun was almost down and the scene as a whole was one of rugged repose; the unslumbering wind had calmed to a point of wayward indolence, and there was not a sound to indicate vivid existence. The view that meets one's enraptured vision is the perpetual despair of painter's brush or poet's song.

Bare, sun-scorched buttes, rain-rutted and furrowed, form the outposts of chaotic masses of variegated clay, scoria and stone, thrown higely-pigely—making the panora-

ma look as if the debris of earth had been broom-swept into this industrial devastation. As far as one can see along the course of the Little Missouri in either direction there is not an eye-offending work of man. Such wild magnificence, such chaos and mystery, such vastness, such freedom, such isolation! The close up view reveals the variegated clay, the red scoria, the black seams of lignite stored up in earth's vernal years—when the saurian and the mammoth held sway.

In many cases the buttes are begirt with fringes of shrubbery splotted with white blossoms of buckthorn, juneberry, plum and chokecherry and an occasional snowy dome of kinnikinnik—while tongues of dark green grass reach up the narrow valleys so amorously watered by the declivities.

In almost any direction one looks there is a Sierra of rugose, cedar-fringed crags, alternating with conical clay spires of varying heights and sizes often separated by shrub-bearing gorges, impassable except at infrequent intervals.



The peaks in the midst of the Badlands seem to stand in unstable equilibrium. This adds to their apparent evanescence and changeableness. As far as one can see to the north or south unending wonder greets the eye—but to the east or west in the shadowy distance the flux and flow of the badlands fade in harmonious outline into the effortless rest of the open prairies.

As the tints of evening shaded into the panoply of night the northern lights sent their shifting rays far above the horizon, robing the heavens in gorgeous pageantry, a proper apparaling of the sky as a fitting accompaniment to the sumptuous color scheme on this vast canvas splashed from the palette of the Infinite.

Except for the northern lights it would have been dark when I reached the foot of Medicine Pole Hill. A wolf set up a lone-some howl from a nearby butte. There are sounds that accentuate the feeling of vastness, of freedom, of isolation, and none does

this so effectively as the prolonged fear-shuddering howl of the gray wolf as it reverberates in deep crescendo among the half-clad buttes.

I had seen the bush burning and heard the voice in the flame.

## A TENDERFOOT, A COWBOY, AND A TRUTH



IN The good old days in North Dakota when Senator Jud La Moure acted as watchdog of the treasury, the western part of the state was little known to those living in the Red River Valley. There was no state institution west of Mandan, hence no junketing trip or institutional investigation ever gave occasion to visit us. However, the senate and house members travelled on passes which they could use to their heart's content when relieved, as they occasionally were, from their legislative grind. Especially at week-ends those from the eastern counties occasionally visited the Badlands—which, because less known, were even greater objects of mystery and wonder than at present.

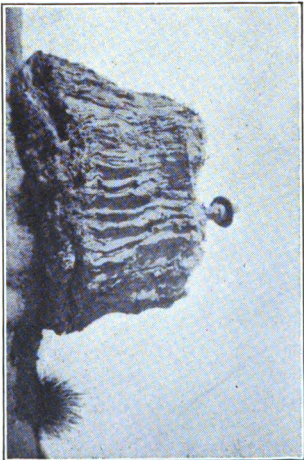
On one such occasion about a half dozen law makers came to Sentinel Butte, then

the most westerly town in the State, and of course was as far as their passes would take them. They arrived on Saturday evening after dark and found their way through the unlighted streets to the Butte Hotel. The cowboys learned of their coming and, being desirous of staging a little fun in honor of the event, sent numerous fusiades from their equalizers into the night air.

As volley after volley belched forth, a noticeable uneasiness began to take hold of the group of solons in the hotel lobby—and well might they be uneasy as at that time there was no closed season on tenderfeet in Sentinel Butte. One of them, more agitated than the others, paced backwards and forwards to the plate glass window facing out upon the streets, and shading his eyes tried to get some idea of the pitched battle he was sure was in progress. He flinched and shuddered at every flash out of the darkness and its accompanying report, and the hideous whooping-up the boys were indulging in chilled the marrow in his bones.

When he could no longer stand the suspense, and though trying to screen his ignorance of the frontier, he turned to an old time cowman who was leaning back against the wall smoking, apparently wholly oblivious of the commotion going on in the street, and asked in a subdued but agitated tone, flavored by a Norwegian accent: "How often do they kill people out here? Whereupon the old ranger deliberately took his cigar from his mouth and turning his head slowly toward his questioner, answered:

"Only once".



### "BADLAND ODDITIES"

- a. Pedestal of clay surmounted by large mass of scoria.
- b. Silicified stump.

(Courtesy N. D. Good Roads Ass'n.)

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